

Community Engagement Conference

Partnering to Advance Health and Wellness



IGNITE

January 24 and 25, 2018

Putting a Positive SPIN on Urban Youth Development through Gardening and 4-H in Franklin County

- **Presenters:** **Sue Hogan** – OSU Extension educator, 4-H youth development;
- **Beth Boomershine** – OSU Extension educator, 4-H youth development;
- **Marilyn Rabe** – OSU Extension educator, family and consumer sciences



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PUTTING A POSITIVE SPIN ON URBAN YOUTH DEVELOPMENT THROUGH GARDENING & 4-H IN FRANKLIN COUNTY

2018 Community Engagement Conference
The Ohio State University

Sue Hogan, Beth Boomershine & Marilyn Rabe
OSU Extension, Franklin County



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What is 4-H?

- Founded in 1902 in Springfield, Ohio
- Nation's largest youth development program
- 6.5 million youth from urban, suburban & rural areas participate in 4-H community clubs & more
- 540,000 volunteers nationwide
- 60 million alumni
- One in every six Ohioans has been a participant
- Managed by the state land-grant university (OSU)
- 4-H is much more than cows and cooking!



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What is a 4-H SPIN (Special Interest Club)?

- Any topic (gardening, rocketry, etc.)
- One hour a week or more
- Short term-duration (6-8 weeks)
- Takes place in a school, afterschool, recreation center, etc.



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What is the Connection Between SPIN Clubs and First Generation 4-H Youth?

- A quick, effective way to introduce youth and adults to 4-H
- All youth can benefit from 4-H: leadership, citizenship, public speaking opportunities; project-based experiential learning



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Why Was a Garden SPIN Club Implemented in Franklin County?

- Multiple requests for youth garden education from urban/suburban audiences/government officials, etc.
- Proven benefits of youth gardening
- Needs of Immigrant (New American) audiences: gardening can transcend language barriers



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There are no gardening mistakes, only experiments

--Janet Kilburn Phillips



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Master Gardener Volunteers Taught the 4-H *In the Garden SPIN Club:*

- Vetted volunteers
- Have content area expertise
- First year recruits needed to earn hours
- Agriculture & Natural Resources Educator in Franklin County coordinated
- Master Gardeners attended a pre-training



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In the Garden 4-H SPIN Club Site Guidelines:

1. Attend *meet and greet* preliminary meeting
2. Enroll 12-15, 3rd to 5th grade youth who will be in the club for its duration
3. Have a garden on site that is ready to go in advance of the program/plant tomatoes and zucchini
4. Have parents/guardians complete OSU Extension photo release forms in advance of the program
5. Identify a staff person to be on site with the volunteers for behavior management purposes of the children
6. Provide a few inexpensive supplies (the program was free and most supplies were provided)



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Health and Wellness/Nutrition-Based Objectives of the 4-H Garden SPIN Club



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Gardens support student inquiry & connect youth to the natural world while generating positive attitudes about learning.

(Habib & Coherty, 2007)



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Gardening can increase self-understanding, interpersonal & cooperative skills.

(Robinson & Zajicek, 2005)

Children who work in gardens are more likely to accept people different from themselves.

(Dymont & Bell, 2006)

Gardening engages children in moderate exercise.

(Gross & Lane, 2007)



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Children who grow their own food are likely to eat more fruits and vegetables.

(Bell & Dymont, 2008)



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They are also more inclined to continue healthy eating habits throughout adulthood.

(Morris & Zidenberg-Cherr)



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Studies show that youth who garden report feeling calm, safe, happy and relaxed in the garden

(Habib & Doherty, 2007)



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Pilot project 2016--What Worked; What Didn't

Worked:

1. MG Volunteers invested and worked hard to make the program work;
2. MGs participated in extensive evaluation that led to program guidelines for 2017—implementation year
3. Children seemed excited about the garden activities
4. Program site personnel wanted to repeat the following year



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Pilot project 2016--What Worked; What Didn't

Didn't Work:

1. Some sites did not put in a garden as requested
2. Some sites did not follow preliminary requirements



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Year Two: Program Implementation



Worked:

1. MG Volunteers invested and worked hard to make the program work; also participated in extensive evaluation
2. Program site personnel want to repeat in 2018
3. Additional activities added (including yoga in the garden) for sites with repeat children
4. Preliminary *Meet and Greet* onboarding for participants; hard copy of requirements discussed in person



Year Two: Program Implementation



Didn't Work:

1. Some sites still did not follow all guidelines, although there was significant improvement from the previous year

Year Three: The program continues...!



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